

## CHAPTER 1

### *Introduction to Family Law*

- A. The Approach to Family Law
- B. Jurisdiction; Service of Process; Venue
- C. Ethics and the Paralegal
- D. The Family Code
- E. Validity of Marriage

#### **CHAPTER OVERVIEW**

Family law is one of the most challenging and rapidly evolving areas of law today. It involves elements of psychology, taxation, mathematics, accounting, and, of course, law, to name but a few. In addition, the accomplished practitioner in this field must excel at legal research and writing, trial advocacy, and human relations. It has often been said that family law is an area in which it is relatively easy to do poorly and difficult to do well.

This exciting area of the law involves virtually every aspect of the human condition; never will the practitioner see, hear, and experience the range of human emotion as in family law. When one catches a person involved in a marital dissolution, one is not seeing him at his best. Any unpleasant behavior is forgotten, though, the first time a parent thanks you for literally saving her child's life. Believe it; it happens.

This chapter will introduce some of the general concepts used in family law. You will review some basic aspects of civil procedure and study in some depth concepts of jurisdiction, service of process, and venue. You will be exposed to some of the ethical aspects of the practice of law in

